

16 February 1955

Dear Josho Esther.

Cross-logged? That's only for modern youth. Real old timers kneel and sit on their heels. We have trained ourselves to do this in inns and restaurants, on the straw tatami, for periods as long as 1/2 hour. In the Kabuki plays (spectacular but too realistic, and therefore unconvincing) and in the Noh drama (symbolic, like a Greek tragedy and therefore believable) they may squat for hours, as calm as Buddha himself. By the way, this spring is his 2500th anniversary; Mozart is only 200 years old. But he (the latter) was well celebrated here, especially since the Viennese Jungenknaben are at the moment in residence.

That's the trouble with Tokyo - so international: G.I.'s, Russians, Germans, etc., all over the place, and even the sweet little Japanese girls curl their hair. But next month we start six weeks the Far West. Yes, that's what they say when referring to far off Kansai (Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, etc.) and Kagoshima, where we are still men (relative, of course, to the position of women). This will be our second, and I hope a more leisurely, visit to the west. How we look forward to it--freedom from the hundreds (well, 150 anyway) of students who avidly devour the errors in my lectures, from our brand-new lab (temp. 50°F.), from our fine little house with straw carpets (tatami) and sliding screens (shoji), our little garden and our cute little maid (sukoshi English-speaking) who eats suppers in our absence, and despite our protests, costing 5¢. How can I tell you how we love Japan?

It's not only the Geisha girls (expensive, and seen only when some company, solicitous for reasons I do not comprehend, invites us for a fabulous repast). Nor is it the strange music on the radio (mixed with Scarlatti and Beethoven). It's not the sumo wrestling, nor the judo, nor the handball which I play with amnister at the "Y". Nor is it the soccer in which I am knocked to the ground, bruised and cut by midgets, nor the tennis and the hot baths, in the absence of showers, which follow. It's not the pottery (which triggers a madness in Betty), or the kimono or the wood-block prints or ink paintings. Perhaps part of it is the O-sake and the raw fish and the stuffed peanuts. But that can't be all!

Surely it's the millions of bright-faced school children in navy blue uniforms, who troop in groups of tens of thousands to the historic spots we visit ourselves. It must be the bird-like conductresses on the buses, who excuse the necessity to stop at a light, or the swerve or bump just passed, and who thank you individually as you descend. Or the pretty little misses in the department stores who say "Irasshaimase" (Welcome), at each escalator landing. Or the little boys flying kites or playing samurai with two toy swords; or little girls, in long-sleeved kimono, playing battledore and shuttlecock, or carrying dolls strapped to their backs as their mothers carry their younger sisters. Perhaps deeply involved is the eagerness of my colleagues at the lab to know everything they can, and their industry and hospitality. And the friendliness of the Professors of Fisheries and of Forestry and of Plant Physiology, and of the General Manager of the School of Agriculture. And the fact that the Indian students here look so much to Japan as the Asiatic country which showed that Orientals can be as progressive as the West, and even beat them, and still retain the grace

ammm

i mmm in mmm

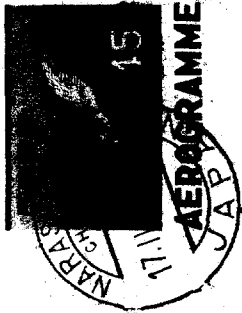
ここにも通信文を記載することができます

This space is also for correspondence.

the streets, we are impressed by the selfishness and anxiety so strongly lined into their faces.

Just remember this about Japan. No other country in the world takes out of the ocean so many octopi, tuna, shrimp, oysters, sea weeds, sea urchins, eels, squid, lobsters, whales, porpoises, blow fish, sea cucumbers, etc., and eats them all. And no other country makes O-sake!

Please forgive the fact that this letter to you is a carbon. I do feel a debt to you since you recorded Van Niel.



Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin

U. S. A.

F. Ryan
Univ. of Tokyo
unkyo-ku, Tokyo

PAR AVION
航空

この郵便物には何物も封入又は添附できません
Nothing may be contained in or attached to this letter

do nomination of me for this post which I thoroughly enjoy

What's new in recombination? Enjoyed my chance last summer to talk to Luca re Jacob. Wollmans work. Big effort here is somatic recombination in Asperg.

Will we see you two in Tokyo in Sept.?

With all best wishes

Sincerely

* I regret my letter on that correspondence